

HORIZONTAL THIN FILM WRITE, MR READ HEAD**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5 A horizontal combined head is provided which has both a thin film write and an MR read element located at an air bearing surface (ABS). The read element can be formed with a track width that is independent of the track width of the write element. The MR sensor or the read element is separated from one of the first and second pole pieces of the write element by an insulation layer. Accordingly, the shields for the read element remain more stable after a write operation. In one embodiment of the present invention a single stripe MR sensor is employed while in a second embodiment a dual stripe MR sensor is employed. A method of the invention includes forming the dual MR stripe in a single process step so that the dual MR stripes of the dual MR sensor are near identical for implementing near absolute common mode rejection of noise.

10